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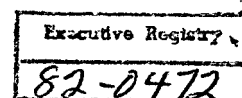
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February 8, 1982



Admiral Bobby R. Inman
Deputy Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Admiral Inman:

I appreciated your summarizing briefly your position the other evening at the Council on Foreign Relations meeting for Senator Tower, and have since examined your statement and subsequent remarks; perhaps the following reaction might be of use to you.

- * Sharing as I do your own feeling that "technology" rather than "science" is really at issue, it is unfortunate that so many may come to feel that, somehow, scientists are "hemorrhaging something" when, in fact, they are only tangentially related to the problem you described.
- * The control of applied technology is really a problem to be laid at the door of America's corporations. I do hope the Administration will not flail (individual) scientists rather than reason with corporations simply because the former are, politically, an easier target. (This sort of thing does happen when an Administration talks at length about cuts in scientific exchange to pressure the Soviets and then refuses to stop the overwhelmingly more important sale of grain!)
- * I think your fears of Congress overreacting against science if scientists do not adopt a form of voluntary censorship are overstated. I think--and I think you think also--that it really is not very practical, with basic research, to try to figure out what harm its advance might do to the national security. On the whole, it is virtually the definition of basic research that its results are unpredictable. Congress will see that. And the examples in Congressional hearings that you see coming down the track are really, again, going to be in applied technology, are they not? And so while I do not mind seeing the scientific community provoked to think, as you provoked it, I doubt the community is in much trouble here.

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February 8, 1982

On the more general subject, you have probably seen the quotation from James Madison to Thomas Jefferson in 1798 that "Perhaps it is a universal truth that the loss of liberty at home is always to be charged to provisions against danger, real or pretended, from abroad". We have found a number of occasions to see the truth of that in present intelligence community practices; while you will not, I think, want to comment on these possibilities, I do wish to state them:

- * The NSA's attitude toward Soviet eavesdropping on U.S. public phones appears to be based on a greater interest in avoiding a "jamming war" and the consequent loss of our limited ability to monitor Soviet phones, than on our interest in protecting American citizens and corporations from Soviet espionage.
- * The NSA efforts to hold down Bureau of Standards rules for encryption devices appears to be based on its greater interest in keeping foreign codes breakable than in preventing Soviet espionage here.
- * And now there is CIA interest in reducing scientific freedom to write publicly about high technology subjects, so as to prevent loss of these secrets abroad.

On the whole, I believe that the present Soviet approach to advancing its technology is much in our favor. They believe in stealing secrets rather than in developing a climate inside their own country in which science can be advanced effectively. Since, quite obviously, stealing secrets leaves them permanently behind, and more important, permanently without a modern infrastructure that can really exploit the secrets they steal, this is much to our advantage in our competition with them. (As you may know, there is even a school of liberal scientific thought in the Soviet Union which believes it to be in the underlying Soviet interest if the West would refuse scientific exchange, and would thus disabuse the Russian Government of its centuries old approach to Western advance--with a view, of course, to leading the Soviet Government to provide, in desperation, more freedom for Soviet scientists.)

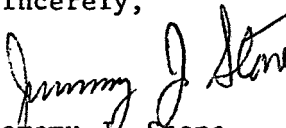
All this shows that our strength is in our own freedom; even the Russian tendency to try to keep up by stealing the technological crumbs from our table is not clearly in their interest.

In any case, this letter reveals the biases upon which our organization normally approaches these issues. We want America kept free and the scientific community free also. We see the clear possibility that self-imposed threats to our freedom could exceed the dangers from abroad. On the whole, America has not found itself losing the technological race with the Russians as it may, for example, be losing some contests with the Japanese. On the contrary, the Russians are keeping up only in the military field and only with the greatest of difficulty. This must be especially obvious to CIA officials, who can monitor the disastrous state of the Soviet economy.

February 8, 1982

You, sir, we consider capable of keeping two ideas in mind at the same time! And we are writing with the request that your important influence not be used in ways that will hurt one kind of American freedom in the name of another, unless the issues are very tightly framed and the dangers clear and direct. The confusion that has already ensued between science and technology shows, to my mind, that this time has not yet come for voluntary censorship of scientific research.

Sincerely,



Jeremy J. Stone

JJS:jff